

PLAN. SHOP. COOK.

THE COLLEGE GUIDE TO SAVING MONEY ON GROCERIES

HILLTOPPER
NUTRITION



Kelci Murphy, RDN, LD
Nutrition Associate Manager
270-745-4650
kelci.murphy@wku.edu



Amber O'Callaghan, RDN, LD
Nutrition Coordinator
270-745-6044
amber.ocallaghan-aff@wku.edu

IN THIS GUIDE YOU'LL FIND...

PLANNING

Effective planning is the cornerstone of financial success for college students. By strategizing shopping trips, meal planning for the week, checking existing inventory, preparing a precise grocery list, and setting a budget, students can avoid unnecessary expenses, save time, and ensure their spending aligns with their financial goals.

SHOPPING

Savvy shopping involves taking advantage of seasonal produce, joining reward programs for discounts, staying informed about sales through ads and coupons, and opting for cost-effective generic brands. These practices empower students to maximize their purchasing power, making every dollar count during their grocery trips.

COOKING

In the kitchen, students can save money by opting for quick and easy meals, minimizing food waste through organized meal preparation and leftovers, experimenting with new recipes for variety, and considering the cooking environment, whether it's a dorm or an apartment. These cooking strategies not only promote financial efficiency but also foster healthy eating habits and culinary exploration.

CONTINUE READING FOR A BREAKDOWN OF MONEY SAVING TIPS

PLAN

1. Strategic Shopping Trips

Plan your shopping trips in advance to stay on budget, save time, and avoid unnecessary purchases.

2. Meal Planning

Think ahead and outline your meals for the week, helping you make more intentional and cost-effective grocery choices.

3. Inventory Check

Before heading to the store, take a look at your pantry, fridge, and freezer to avoid buying items you already have. You can even take a picture of what you have so you don't forget.

4. Grocery List Preparation

Create a detailed grocery list based on your planned meals, helping you stick to essentials and resist impulse buys. Note the items that are on sale so that you can purchase the correct brands & sizes.

5. Budgeting

Set a maximum spending limit for your shopping trips to maintain financial control and avoid overspending.

EXAMPLE

Weekly grocery budget: \$50.

Fresh Produce: \$15

- 1. Leafy Greens*
- 2. Berries*
- 3. Cauliflower + broccoli*

Proteins: \$12

- 1. Eggs*
- 2. Deli turkey*
- 3. Chicken*

Dairy: \$8

- 1. Greek yogurt*

Grains: \$5

- 1. Quinoa*

Monday:

Breakfast: Scrambled eggs with spinach

Lunch: Turkey and avocado wrap

Dinner: Spaghetti with marinara sauce (using canned tomatoes and basic spices)

Tuesday:

Breakfast: Greek yogurt with fresh berries

Lunch: Quinoa salad with veggies

Dinner: Grilled chicken with roasted vegetables

Wednesday:

Breakfast: Oatmeal with sliced bananas

SHOP

1. Seasonal Shopping

Opt for in-season produce as it is often cheaper and fresher. Use online resources to identify them.

2. Reward Programs

Join grocery store reward programs or memberships to take advantage of discounts, special offers, and loyalty rewards.

3. Sale Awareness

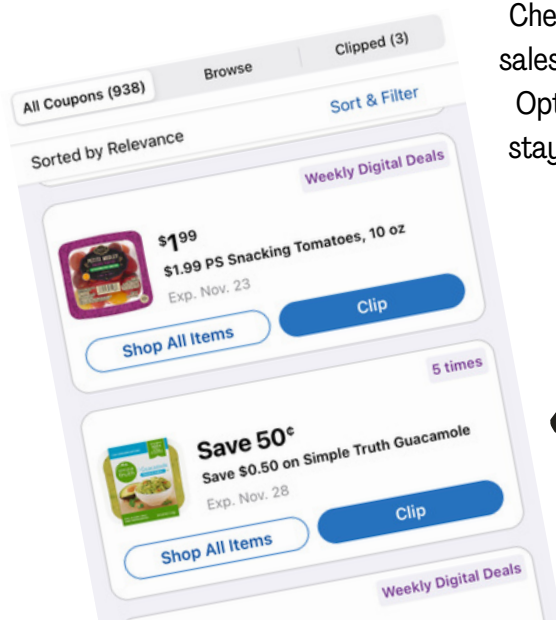
Regularly check sales ads and use coupons to capitalize on discounts, ensuring you get the best deals available. Note that coupons are typically available on the store app.

4. Generic Choices

Consider buying store-branded or generic items, as they are often of similar quality to name brands but at a lower cost.

5. Bulk Buying

Purchase non-perishable items in bulk to take advantage of lower unit prices, saving money in the long run. This approach is particularly beneficial for staples like rice, pasta, and canned goods.



Check online and in-app for sales at your favorite stores.

Opt for grocery pick up to stay on budget and prevent impulse buys.

Research what is in season in the area.



COOK

1. Quick and Easy Meals

Explore quick and easy cooking options that are both time-efficient and healthy, enabling you to enjoy a nutritious meal in just 10 minutes.

2. Minimize Food Waste

Stay organized, be aware of the shelf life of ingredients, and efficiently use leftovers to minimize food waste and save money.

3. Experimentation

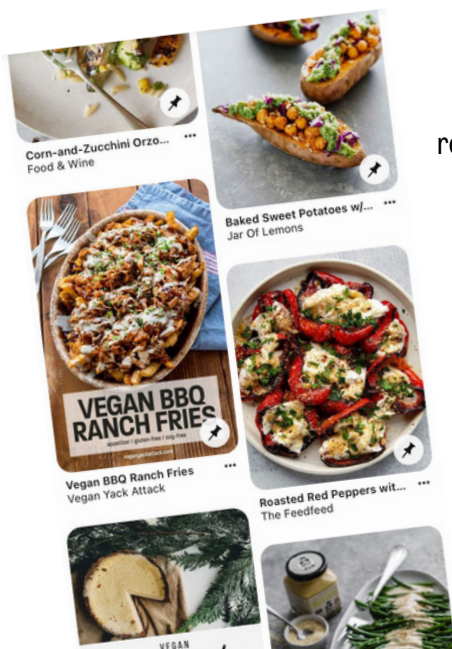
Step out of your comfort zone by trying new recipes or experimenting with different cooking methods, which can introduce variety without breaking the bank.

4. Meal Prep

Consider making enough portions for several meals at one time. This method reduces the total time you will be cooking throughout the week and reduces food waste.

5. Master Basic Recipes

Invest time in mastering a few basic recipes that serve as versatile foundations. Learning to prepare minimizes reliance on expensive pre-packaged options or eating out, contributing to long-term savings.



Save your favorite recipes (& new things to try!) to refer to later.



Make your favorite meals in pre-portioned containers for an easy grab and go.

